

STOPPING ON SLIPPERY ROADS

Once you've shifted to neutral or de-clutched, press the brake pedal gently. If the wheels lock, ease up on the brakes slightly until the wheels unlock, then reapply pressure on the brake pedal. Don't pump the brakes; it will only increase your stopping distance. And remember, it's almost impossible to brake and steer at the same time on a slippery road. If you are braking and decide you want to turn, take your foot off the brake pedal. But keep in mind, the vehicle will then travel in the direction the wheels are turned.

EMERGENCY DRIVING

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

Good drivers rarely get into an emergency situation because they are constantly on the lookout for potential hazards. But even good drivers should know how to react when the unexpected happens. There are several emergency driving techniques taught by driver educators in Ontario, and they all focus on the need for split-second decisions based on the nature of the emergency situation. Depending on your room to manoeuvre, you have three choices of action.

1) THRESHOLD BRAKING

In this emergency driving technique, brake as hard as you can without locking up or skidding the wheels. If you feel any of the wheels locking up, then release the pressure slightly and reapply. Don't pump the brakes. Continue braking until the vehicle comes to a complete stop.

2) STEERING AROUND

Steering around an obstacle may be possible in some emergency situations. Use the threshold braking technique to slow the vehicle down while you decide to steer to the left or right. Then release the brake and steer to a safe area. But remember, if you must enter another lane of traffic, check to make sure the lane is clear.

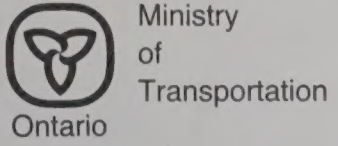
3) FOUR-WHEEL LOCK

Use this emergency driving technique when you must stop the vehicle as quickly as you can in the shortest possible distance. Hit the brakes as hard as you can, locking up all four wheels. Keep maximum pressure on the brake pedal until the vehicle comes to a complete stop. The vehicle will travel in a straight line in the direction it was travelling when the brakes were applied.

So you have three choices in an emergency situation -- threshold braking, steering around, and the four-wheel lock. Shifting to neutral or de-clutching will help in all three emergency driving techniques. If there is room, threshold braking should bring you to a controlled stop in your own lane. If there are safe areas to the side, you may decide to steer around the emergency. If there's no other choice, the four-wheel lock can stop you in the shortest distance. But remember, when the wheels are locked, you don't have any steering control.



Practice emergency driving techniques in a safe, restricted area with a capable instructor.



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# Good Driving Practices

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THE DRIVING TASK

Driving is a very demanding skill -- both mentally and physically. It depends on good reflexes, good judgement and good will toward other motorists. And, more than anything else, it depends on your ability to cope with rapidly changing traffic situations.

Ontario has good highways. And cars and trucks are manufactured with many built-in safety devices. Also, Ontario's accident statistics show that a vast majority of vehicles involved in accidents have no apparent defect. In fact, most accidents happened during the day, when visibility and road conditions were good.

Therefore, it can only be concluded, the greatest single cause for traffic accidents is the driver.

The reasons may vary. On one hand, the problem may be lack of driving skills or experience. On the other, it may be momentary lapses of attention; or failure to compensate for bad road conditions; or driving while impaired by alcohol or drugs; or over confidence.

These are all problems drivers can correct. Anyone can learn to drive. But, learning to drive well is something totally different.

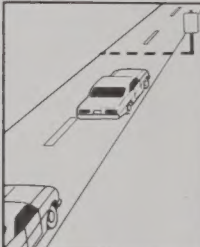
Once you learn the basics of good driving -- practice them. Driving excellence calls for constant effort.

Good drivers keep their eyes open and are alert for the mistakes of others . . . and concentrate on the driving task at all times.

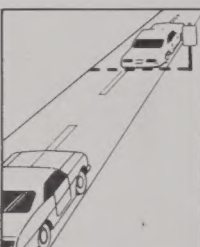
TWO-SECOND RULE

Following another vehicle too closely is a common driver error. There is, however, a simple rule to estimate following distance.

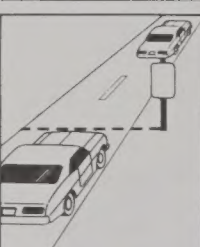
Here's how it works:



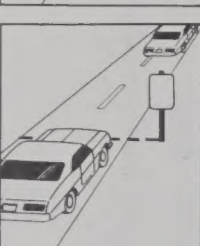
A. The car ahead is approaching a check point (a hydro pole, road sign, etc.)



B. Begin counting as the rear of the car ahead passes the check point.



C. Two seconds (one-thousand-and-one, one-thousand-and-two) is correct.



D. More than two seconds, (one-thousand-and-one, one-thousand-and-two, one-thousand-and-three) adds up to a greater safety factor.

DRIVING POSITION

Before you drive away, the good driver should be seated properly. Sit up and well back in the seat. Your body should fit firmly against the seat back and cushion. Adjust the seat so your feet reach the pedals easily.



To check your position, try placing your right foot flat on the floor under the brake pedal. If you can do so without stretching, you're positioned properly.



All drivers should wear comfortable, flat-heeled shoes allowing them to "feel" the pedals. The left foot, when not operating the clutch, should rest to the left of the pedals comfortably.

Your hands should grip the wheel lightly but firmly. Two hands on the wheel, at about the mid-point position; arms should be bent -- providing good leverage for movement. If you must strain your body to turn the steering wheel or use the brakes, you're too far away. Move closer.

Never drive a car without first adjusting the seating position and mirrors.



## VISION

### TRAFFIC DISTRACTIONS

Driving a vehicle in traffic can be difficult. And concentrating on this task can leave the driver little time for anything else, even casual conversation with passengers. And since there is so much to watch for and attend to, every driver must view traffic selectively, paying close attention to those traffic matters which concern him/her most. The key to successful accident-free traffic driving can be summarized in several ways. All involve one of the most important senses -- vision.

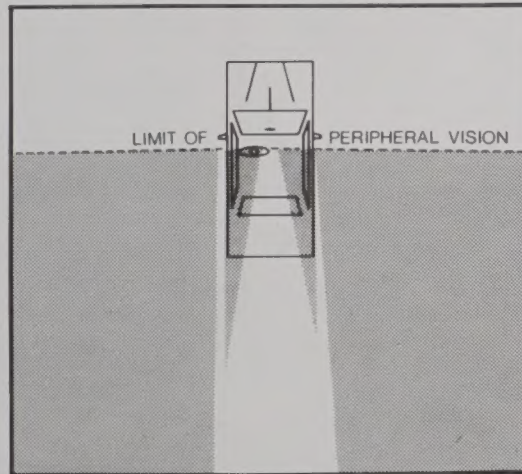
### LOOK UP AND AHEAD

How far ahead you can look depends a lot on the density of traffic flow. On the highway, a driver should look far ahead and allow peripheral vision to take care of what's up close. You don't have to worry about missing situations close to you, your brain won't let you. It will attract you automatically to nearby situations which demand your immediate attention. An eye that sees properly must **MOVE CONTINUOUSLY**. So, don't just stare ahead. Look up and around.



### LOOK BEHIND

Good drivers develop a systematic routine for looking ahead, from side-to-side (in the city, look from sidewalk to sidewalk). Look in the rear-view mirrors. Check your mirrors every 5 to 10 seconds -- and always before you stop, turn or change lanes.



Depending on vehicle design, the shaded areas are potential blind spots.

Even if your mirrors are correctly positioned, there is still a "blind spot" on each side of the vehicle.

Make sure other drivers aren't driving in your blind spot by adjusting your speed. And to help other motorists avoid trouble, don't drive in **their** blind spot. It's a good driving practice to glance over your shoulder, as well as using the mirror, before you make a lane change. Develop your own routine: mirror, signal, shoulder check, lane change. When stopping, check your mirror as you brake.

Some outside mirrors have a curved glass. This convex lens increases the range of vision offered by the mirror, but **OBJECTS SEEN IN THE MIRROR ARE CLOSER** than they appear. Remember that!



### LOOK FOR TROUBLE

Parked vehicles and pedestrians are always a problem for drivers. Look ahead and watch for people in parked vehicles. It could mean they are about to pull out in front of you or open the vehicle door.

A driver should be on the alert for pedestrians. Pedestrians have the right-of-way in most situations. Look out for small children, elderly pedestrians or those in wheelchairs.

Bicycles, mopeds and motorcycles must be given their share of the road. Don't pass too close to a bicycle, particularly if it's driven by a child. And motorcycles and mopeds should be treated the same as a four-wheel vehicle.

In addition, watch out for road maintenance and construction vehicles. When at work, these vehicles move much slower than normal traffic. By looking up and far enough ahead, you will see these vehicles before meeting them. Slow down and give them and the workers plenty of room. In winter watch for the blue flashing light.

### ANTICIPATE

Besides having good reflexes and eyesight, drivers should anticipate. Anticipate trouble ahead, assume the worst conditions and make allowances for every possible error. Always adjust your speed to road, traffic and weather conditions.

### WAITING AT TRAFFIC LIGHTS

Even while you are stopped at a traffic light or sign, don't stop thinking or looking. You must always be prepared for the unexpected. Keep your eyes moving. Pay attention to traffic flow and anticipate vehicle movements. In traffic tie-ups, the same applies. Look ahead, behind and to the sides.



Establish eye-to-eye contact with other drivers. Use your horn if you must get their attention. You see them -- they see you.

### BE SEEN

Make sure other drivers see you. Visual contact with other drivers at intersections is essential. Drivers don't intentionally drive into other vehicles, they just don't see them. So be certain you see them -- and they see you. Don't hesitate to use your horn or headlights to establish eye-to-eye contact. Use your signals. Be positive that your intentions are clear to others.

### DEVELOP A SAFE ROUTINE

Drivers should know their route and always follow a definite routine in traffic. Therefore, think ahead, know the route you're going to follow -- if possible. Always look and signal your moves.

### LEAVE YOURSELF SPACE

Be sure there is sufficient space for your vehicle to fit into the traffic flow. Don't restrict your vision by stopping or driving directly behind large trucks or buses. And don't follow other vehicles too closely. Use the two-second rule. Leave yourself space to change lanes. Remember the blind spot and drive out of it, and keep out of other vehicles' blind spots.

## DAY/NIGHT DRIVING

### NIGHT DRIVING

Night driving is difficult, particularly in the winter when salt residue, snow and dirt on the windshield further limit your visibility. Always keep your windshield clear and washers full of fluid. And, keep your headlights clean.

When meeting oncoming cars with bright headlights, it is hard for a driver's eyes to adjust to glare. And one's eyes are drawn to the bright lights. So, a good driver will resist this urge and look **UP** and **STRAIGHT AHEAD** beyond the lights of the oncoming car and slightly to the right. Switch to low beam lights when you are within 150 m (500 ft.) of an oncoming vehicle. Use your low beams when following another vehicle within 60 m (200 ft.).



Drivers on country roads should lower their headlights when approaching hill crests and corners so they can see any oncoming headlights (and they won't blind oncoming motorists). If there are no headlights visible, switch back to high beam.

When in the act of overtaking or passing at night, switch to high beam, then back to low, warning the driver you wish to pass.

### BRIGHT SUN

Use the sunvisor. Good quality sunglasses may help reduce glare. If you enter a tunnel on a bright day, give your eyes a chance to adjust -- slow down.

## BRAKING

### NORMAL BRAKING

Good drivers anticipate stops and start braking early, bringing the vehicle to a halt smoothly and safely. You'll find this much easier if you're in the correct seating position. And it's advisable to use your right foot on the brake to prevent stepping on the gas and brake at the same time.

### TEST YOUR BRAKES

A periodic brake check is a good idea, especially if road conditions are bad or if you've been driving through water. Water on the brake drums can seriously impair braking efficiency.

When it's safe to do so, test the brakes by stopping quickly and firmly at about 50 km/h (30 mph). Make sure the vehicle stops in a straight line, without pulling to one side or the other.

### BAD WEATHER BRAKING

Braking in bad weather calls for gradual application of the brakes without locking the wheels on wet, icy or snow-covered roads. And stopping on slippery roads is more effective if you shift to neutral in an automatic or depress the clutch in a manual shift. By shifting to neutral or de-clutching, the power is disconnected from the drive wheels, thus eliminating the drive of the wheels against the brakes.

De-clutching is easy, but shifting to neutral in an automatic requires practice. With a column-mounted shift quadrant, push forward (away from you) and upward with the palm of your hand facing the dashboard and your fingers pointing up. Don't pull the lever toward you because you could accidentally engage reverse or park. If the automatic shift lever is mounted on the console, push the lever forward with the palm of your hand. Don't push the button.

